

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 03217 031426Z
ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NSF-01 NAS-01 SSO-00 INRE-00
NSCE-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /062 W
-----010553 031440Z /53

O 031347Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6092

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 3217

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCLR, TPHY, NO, SV
SUBJECT: USE OF C-130 TRANSPORT FOR SVALBARD SCIENTIFIC PROJECT

1. IN A JULY 2 CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, MFA POLAR
AFFAIRS ADVISOR BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN EXPRESSED
CONCERN ABOUT THE PROPOSED USE BY THE NSF OF A C-130
TRANSPORT PLANE IN SUPPORT OF AN ALASKA UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH PROJECT AT SVALBARD.

2. BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID THAT MFA HAD ONLY LEARNED
ABOUT MATTER INDIRECTLY AND WAS NOT, THEREFORE, TOTALLY
CERTAIN ABOUT FACTS. AS MFA UNDERSTANDS IT, THE NSF IS
PROVIDING THE C-130 TO TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT FOR THE ALASKA
UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PROJECT ON NORTHERN LIGHTS. THE
PROJECT APPEARS TO CALL FOR THE AIRCRAFT TO BRING THE
EQUIPMENT TO THE LONGYEARBYEN AIRPORT ON JULY 26.
MFA ALSO UNDERSTANDS THAT THERE WILL BE TWO AIRCREWS OF SIX
MEN EACH, WITH THE SECOND CREW ALONG FOR TRAINING PURPOSES.

3. BUCHER ASKED IF THE AIRCRAFT WILL BE CARRYING ARMED
FORCES INSIGNIA OR WOULD BE OTHERWISE IDENTIFIABLE,
AS A MILITARY AIRCRAFT. HE ALSO ASKED IF THE AIRCREW
MEMBERS ARE MILITARY PERSONNEL.

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PAGE 02 OSLO 03217 031426Z

4. MFA CONCERN IS THAT USSR WOULD SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY
PROVIDED BY VISIT OF US MILITARY AIRCRAFT TO ALLEGE VIOLATIONS
OF THE DEMILITARIZATION PROVISIONS (ARTICLE 9) OF THE PARIS TREATY
OR, OF POSSIBLY GREATER CONCERN, TO USE SUCH A VISIT AS
A PRECEDENT FOR BRINGING THEIR OWN MILITARY AIRCRAFT
TO SVALBARD.

5. BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN POINTED OUT THAT, IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS IN REGARD TO THE AIRCRAFT, IT MIGHT BE PREFERABLE TO LAND THE AIRCRAFT AT TROMSOE AND TRANSSHIP THE EQUIPMENT BY BOAT TO SVALBARD.

6. COMMENT: AVIATION MATTERS HAVE BEEN A SENSITIVE POINT IN THE NORWEGIAN-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP ON SVALBARD AND THE GON IS CONCERNED ABOUT GIVING THE SOVIETS A PRETEXT ON WHICH TO RE-OPEN THE QUESTIONS CONCERNING AIRFIELDS IN GENERAL. AS NOTED ABOVE, THE DEMILITARIZATION ASPECT IS ALSO A CONCERN IN THIS CASE.

7. IN VIEW OF THE SHORT TIME REMAINING BEFORE THE SCHEDULED ARRIVAL OF THE AIRCRAFT, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RAPID RECEIPT OF INFORMATION REQUESTED BY GON.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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